



CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE COST ESTIMATE

August 20, 1998

H.R. 1481

Great Lakes Fish and Wildlife Restoration Act of 1998

As ordered reported by the House Committee on Resources on August 5, 1998

SUMMARY

H.R. 1481 would authorize the appropriation of \$8 million for each of the fiscal years 1999 through 2003 to the Department of the Interior (DOI) for fish and wildlife restoration activities in the Great Lakes Basin. The bill also would direct the Secretary of the Interior to enter into cooperative agreements that establish research units at two universities. The cooperative agreements required by the bill would be administered by the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS). Based on information from USGS, CBO estimates that establishing these research units would cost almost \$1 million each year, subject to appropriation of the necessary amounts.

CBO estimates that implementing H.R. 1481 would result in outlays of about \$8 million in fiscal year 1999 and of \$44 million over the 1999-2003 period, assuming appropriations action. Because H.R. 1481 would not affect direct spending or receipts, pay-as-you-go procedures would not apply.

H.R. 1481 contains no intergovernmental or private-sector mandates as defined in the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act (UMRA). State and tribal governments might incur some costs as a result of the bill's enactment, but these costs would be voluntary.

DESCRIPTION OF THE BILL'S MAJOR PROVISIONS

H.R. 1481 would authorize the appropriation of \$3.5 million for each of the fiscal years 1999 through 2003 for the activities of the three offices that coordinate all U.S. Fish and Wildlife activities in the Great Lakes Basin: the Great Lakes Coordination Office, the Upper Great Lakes Fishery Resources Office, and the Lower Great Lakes Fishery Resources Office. These offices also provide administrative and technical support to carry out these activities. The previous authorization of appropriations for these offices expired in fiscal year 1995.

H.R. 1481 also would authorize the appropriation of \$4.5 million for each of the fiscal years 1999 through 2003 for the federal costs associated with implementing fish and wildlife restoration projects approved by the Secretary of the Interior. The bill would establish a Great Lakes Fish and Wildlife Restoration Proposal Review Commission, composed of representatives of states and Indian tribes to evaluate proposed projects. Under H.R. 1481, at least 25 percent of the total cost of implementing a proposal would have to be paid by nonfederal sources in cash or through in-kind contributions. The bill also would direct the Secretary of the Interior to prepare a report on the review, implementation, and results of fish and wildlife restoration proposals in the Great Lakes Basin by December 31, 2002.

The bill also would direct the Secretary of the Interior to enter into cooperative agreements to establish cooperative research units at Michigan State University and Rutgers University to provide for training, technical assistance, and research on fisheries, wildlife, and natural resources in the Great Lakes and Mid-Atlantic regions, respectively.

ESTIMATED COST TO THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

The estimated budgetary impact of H.R. 1481 is shown in the following table. For the purposes of this estimate, CBO assumes that the authorized and estimated amounts will be appropriated near the start of each fiscal year and that outlays will follow historical patterns for similar activities. We also assume that nonfederal sources will provide matching contributions for restoration proposals on a timely basis. The costs of this legislation fall within budget function 300 (natural resources and the environment).

| | By Fiscal Year, in Millions of Dollars | | | | | |
|--|--|------|------|------|------|------|
| | 1998 | 1999 | 2000 | 2001 | 2002 | 2003 |
| SPENDING SUBJECT TO APPROPRIATION | | | | | | |
| Spending Under Current Law | | | | | | |
| Budget Authority ^a | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Estimated Outlays | 1 | b | b | b | 0 | 0 |
| Proposed Changes | | | | | | |
| Estimated Authorization Level | 0 | 9 | 9 | 9 | 9 | 9 |
| Estimated Outlays | 0 | 8 | 9 | 9 | 9 | 9 |
| Spending Under H.R. 1481 | | | | | | |
| Estimated Authorization Level ^a | 2 | 9 | 9 | 9 | 9 | 9 |
| Estimated Outlays | 1 | 8 | 9 | 9 | 9 | 9 |

a. The 1998 level is the amount appropriated for that year.

b. Less than \$500,000.

PAY-AS-YOU-GO CONSIDERATIONS: None.

ESTIMATED IMPACT ON STATE, LOCAL, AND TRIBAL GOVERNMENTS

H.R. 1481 contains no intergovernmental mandates as defined in UMRA. State or tribal governments that seek and receive federal funds for fish and wildlife restoration projects, as authorized by this bill, would be required to pay at least 25 percent of the projects' costs. In addition, state and tribal governments would incur some minor costs should they choose to participate in the Great Lakes Fish and Wildlife Restoration Proposal Review Committee and the cooperative research units authorized by this bill. These costs would be incurred voluntarily.

ESTIMATED IMPACT ON THE PRIVATE SECTOR

H.R. 1481 contains no private-sector mandates as defined in UMRA.

PREVIOUS CBO ESTIMATE

On July 24, 1998, CBO prepared a cost estimate for S. 659, the Great Lakes Fish and Wildlife Restoration Act of 1998, as ordered reported by the Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works on July 22, 1998. H.R. 1481 is similar to S. 659 but includes an additional requirement that DOI establish cooperative research units at two universities. The estimates differ by \$1 million a year for the costs of those research units.

ESTIMATE PREPARED BY:

Federal Costs: Victoria V. Heid

Impact on State, Local, and Tribal Governments: Marjorie Miller

ESTIMATE APPROVED BY:

Paul N. Van de Water

Assistant Director for Budget Analysis